
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

FISHERY UPDATE



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Sitka Area Office
304 Lake Street, Room 103
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Date: March 31, 2012
Time: 8:00 a.m.

SITKA SOUND HERRING FISHERY UPDATE #8

The department conducted an aerial survey yesterday covering Sitka Sound north of Cape Burunof and Salisbury Sound. Spotting conditions were good under overcast skies and light winds. North of Sitka concentrations of sea lions and whales continue to be seen in the area between the islands and the Baranof Island shoreline distributed from the north end of Kasiana Island to the entrance of Nakwasina Sound. Within this area the higher numbers of sea lions and whales were seen between Halibut Point and Middle Island. At Inner Point there were 150 sea lions, a significant increase since yesterday's count. There were a number of whales scattered throughout the open waters between Inner Point and Crow Island, and three whales were seen near the Chaichie Islands. In Salisbury Sound there was a significant increase in sea lions and whale activity from Kane Islands into St John Baptist Bay with 9 whales and approximately 70 sea lions counted in that area. South of Sitka, there were a few sea lions scattered in the Eastern Channel area and approximately 35 sea lions were seen in Silver Bay.

The *R/V Kestrel* surveyed portions of northern Sitka Sound and Salisbury Sound. A very large volume of herring continues to reside in the area between Halibut Point and Middle Island. Most of this volume is holding in deeper waters with scattered large schools breaking off toward the surface. In Salisbury Sound there were a number of large schools scattered throughout the area from St John Baptist Bay to Kane Island. Waters north of Kane Island were not surveyed.

No test samples were taken in Sitka Sound yesterday. Two samples were taken in Salisbury Sound with the following results:

- N. St. John Bay; 150 t; 8.0% mature roe; 3.0% immature roe; 134 gram; 49% female.
- In St. John Bay; 200 t; 7.2% mature roe; 1.6% immature roe; 136 gram; 38% female.

In the afternoon the department received reports of spot spawns developing on north Middle Island and the Gavanski Islands. Observations from the *R/V Kestrel* showed limited spawning with little volume of herring off the beach where the spawns were occurring.

Aerial and vessel surveys as well as test sampling are planned for today focusing in northern Sitka Sound to continue monitoring for a fishing opportunity.

Updates will be posted on the ADF&G web site listed below, and on a recorded message phone at (907) 747-1009.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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